

THE WEEKLY GRAPHIC

AND NEW ZEALAND MAIL

VOL. XLIV.—NO. 9

MARCH 2, 1910

Subscription—25/ per annum; if paid in advance, 20/. Single copy—Sixpence.

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mense strategic importance of well-equipped and well-organized railways.

Nelson Scenery.

Lord Plunket's remarks on the need of advertising and making more widely known the many beauty spots in the Nelson province were well timed, and we hope some practical effect will be given to his suggestion that the many charms of this beautiful province should be brought before the travelling public. Nelson may be said to rival the famous Huon district, in Tasmania, in the claim to the title of the "Orchard of the South." Those who have visited it are always loud in its praises. But, as Lord Plunket remarked, while everyone has heard of Rotorua, the Buller Gorge and the Wanganui river, comparatively few have heard of the Takaka Hills. In these days, beauty that blushes unseen generally does so from lack of advertisement, and, compared with other countries, New Zealand, as a whole, is singularly backward in the art of efficient advertising. It is all very well for critics like Mr Wilson, of the "Investor's Review," to sneer at the Queensland advertisements, and to nick-name that State "Braggart Queensland," and compare it to a man beating a big drum outside a circus tent; but the fact remains that Queensland owes much of its present prosperity to this very beating of the big drum, and a little more of the big drum in the Nelson province would attract scores of people to its many and unrivalled scenic attractions.

An Ideal Home.

But it is not only as a tourist resort that Nelson offers so many advantages. There are few parts of New Zealand better suited to that large class of people who, possessed of moderate means, desire a healthy and pretty country in which to make a home. There are in England alone thousands of men who, while still in the prime of life, have retired from a business or professional career with a small pension or a modest competence. Many of these are wont to take themselves and their families to some second-rate English watering-place, or such Continental resorts as St. Malo, St. Servan, Dinard or Dinan. There they lead an aimless existence in semi-detached villas or cheap "pensions." How much better would it be were they to migrate to our Britain of the South, where they could secure cheap and good sections and build up a home of their own. The cost of living would be considerably less, the range of interests considerably greater. For the cost of living is not merely the cost of tea and meat and flour and sugar: the cost of living is the cost of keeping up the standard adopted by the set amongst which you move. Many retired officers find £300 or £400 a year in England spells only respectable poverty, while the same sum here would ensure most of the comforts of life. Even the highest education is practically free, social life makes comparatively small de-

mands on our purses, and limited means offer no bar to the enjoyment of good and cultured society. Mr Hamilton Stewart, the well-known actor, said, in speaking of Nelson, that when he retired he would sooner go to live there than any other place he knew of. Many others have said the same. Indeed, we can conceive of no place more adapted to the requirements of those who are seeking a home. Genial climate, good soil, magnificent and varied scenery, all combine to make it an ideal spot. It only requires to be better known to make it the most favoured resort in the two islands.

A Warning from the Bench.

It is seldom that a sitting of the Supreme Court goes by without some reference by one or other of our judges to defects in our methods of administering justice. Mr Justice Edwards spoke recently in Auckland on the culpable practice of arresting a person when a summons should have been issued instead. He laid it down as an axiom that no person should be arrested who might reasonably be expected to attend on summons. This is by no means the first time that this practice has been condemned by judges and magistrates, yet time and again men are subjected to the indignity of arrest when a summons would have answered every purpose. More serious still was the severe comment of the same judge on the absolute inhumanity of badgering a dying woman in her last hours for the purpose of getting a statement from her likely to aid a prosecution. There seems to be a growing idea that, once a person is accused, a conviction must be obtained at all costs. The notorious Beck and Edalji cases in England should have taught us that serious miscarriages of justice are apt to result from methods that savour more of persecution than prosecution. If the Crown provides every facility to the prosecution to prove its case, it is only fair and reasonable that equal facilities should be provided for a prisoner to prove his innocence. For no tragedy can be greater than the condemnation of an innocent man.

A Plea for Art in New Zealand.

"Art! you know nothing of art. You are still uncultivated—savages, intellectually speaking—you are not educated—you refuse to be educated. You enjoy coarse pleasures, and pay well for them, but—Art! pictures!—you simply don't understand." This, and much more, was recently fired at closest range at the heads of the representatives of one of the oldest and most influential art societies by a visiting artist, who had—according to paragraphs and introductory letters—"a big reputation in the Old World." Obviously, there had been some loss of serenity on the part of the speaker. As a matter of fact, he was excessively annoyed. He had held an exhibition of his paintings, and neither the attendance of the public nor the extent of the purchases could have satisfied even the most

The Week in Review.

The Strategic Value of Railways.

LORD KITCHENER has explained the absolute necessity of a strategic railway system for Australia, and without presumption we may say that the same advice must apply to New Zealand. Another military expert, Sir Edward Hutton, has, it is true, advised that it is of no use to build lines for defence purposes till we have men to send over them; but this difficulty will be overcome by the time the new Defence Scheme is in good working order. To the commercial welfare of the Dominion which in itself is, or ought to be, sufficient spur to the authorities to hasten on the linking up of the country, must be added the necessity for a practical system of strategic railways for defence purposes. No interstate difficulties can arise in New Zealand as has been the case in Australia, but even in spite of these difficulties across the water, Mr. Deakin assured the inhabitants of Ballarat and Maitland that Lord Kitchener's advice is to be acted upon at once, and that preliminary arrangements are already being made for opening up negotiations between the States for a trans-Continental railway. To the layman in these matters the idea of a line to go through vast tracks of land which make such a huge blank space on the map seems somewhat extraordinary, but the last report of the surveyors of at least part of the blank space, is to the effect that there are approximately 25,000,000 acres of land which they describe as "fair to good," and as capable of carrying over a million and a-half sheep. Again, on the South Australian side, there are considerable areas of land which will be available for pastoral purposes after the line is run through.

The advent of a railway will give almost any land a higher value, and it is considered by the authorities that if the West goes ahead as it has done during

the past decade, the end of another ten years should see a profit of something like £18,000.

As applied to New Zealand, now let us consider the position as regards New Zealand. Though not perhaps of such paramount importance as in a continent like Australia, yet the dire need of railways—and efficient railways—is obvious to all who have the Dominion's welfare at heart. One of the first steps must of necessity be the linking up and expanding of the northern lines both in the North and the South Islands. The completed Main Trunk line from "Farthest North" to Wellington, and from Pictou (which has been mentioned as a candidate for naval honours) down to the Bluff, must assuredly be the working basis. Other cross-country lines would follow in due course, but the initial move must be the putting down of lines over the remaining 260 odd miles of railless country. This would mean that troops could be mobilised from the North Cape to Invercargill by rail, the only occasion for the use of steamers being, of course, Cook Strait. It is necessary, also, that the speed of our trains should be considerably accelerated. In the train arrangements for the Wellington camp, the Wanganui volunteers were scheduled to take 11 hours to go from Wanganui to Johnsonville. This works out to under 14 miles an hour, and the speed on many other lines is even less than this. Rapidity of mobilisation is of the essence of successful defence, and every facility should be provided for the rapid mobilisation of troops. There is no doubt that, as Lord Kitchener says, we possess a splendid young manhood, and we have every confidence that the authorities will not only adopt such measures as will enable our youth to render themselves thoroughly efficient for the defence of their country, but will also see that we are not behind the Australian States in our recognition of the im-